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EXAMINER

DASS, HARISH T

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3693

DATE MAILED: 10/19/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/986,173

Applicant(s)

HINCKLEY, PAUL F.

Examiner

Harish T. Dass

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 November 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Choudhury et al. "Uses and consequences of electronic markets: An empirical investigation in the aircraft parts industry", Vivek Choudhury, Kathleen S Hartzel, Benn R Konsynski. MIS Quarterly. Minneapolis: Dec 1998.Vol.22, Iss. 4; pg. 471, 37 pgs (hereinafter Choudhury) in view of Khan (US 2002/0032611).

Re. Claim 1, Choudhury discloses at least one user interface configured to at least one of receive data indicating at least one internal part number and at least one manufacturer part number for a component identified as an approved replacement component and output data included in the master cross reference list of components [see entire document particularly, page 9 (inventory locator service); page 15 (use of electronic markets); page 8 (the aircraft parts); page 2];

a master cross reference module configured to identify at least one inferred equivalent component based on the data indicating the at least one internal part number and the at least one manufacturer part number for the component identified as the

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approved replacement component [pages 7-9; page 7 (central database=master database)]; and

a master cross reference data structure configured to store the identity of at least one inferred equivalent component, the at least one internal part number and the at least one manufacturer part number for the component identified as the approved replacement component, wherein the master cross reference module is configured to determine, output or store data to the master cross reference data structure, that data indicating the identity of at least one inferred equivalent component, the at least one internal part number and the at least one manufacturer part number for the component identified as the approved replacement component in association with a universal part number pages 7-9; page 7 (central database=master database)].

Choudhury does not explicitly disclose Substitute part. However, Khan discloses this feature [Abstract; Figure 6; paragraph 29; 31-32] to include visual interface, query tool and internet vendor data search engine to allow buyer to search all possible cross references substitute parts. Further, substitute parts from different industries are will known to designers, repairing technicians and procurement agents. For example, in electronic industries where semiconductor parts are widely used substitution parts or replacement part are common, as an example, op-amp 741 is manufactured by many companies and each company has its own stock name (LM741CN, LM741EH, LF441MH, MC1458 NE5558 etc.). It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the disclosure of Choudhury and include Substitute part, as disclosed by Khan, to allow buyer to search

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all possible cross references substitute parts or replacement parts and locate a distributor who can deliver crossed replaced stock parts.

Re. Claims 2-4, Choudhury discloses wherein the data indicating the identity of the inferred equivalent component includes a manufacturer part number, and wherein the master cross reference module indicates in the data output or stored to the master cross reference data structure, whether a manufacturer part number associated with a universal part number is an approved substitute (replacement component) component or an inferred equivalent component, and wherein the data indicating the identity of the at least one manufacturer part number for the component identified as the approved substitute component includes data indicating an identity of a data source indicating the approved substitute component [pages 7-9].

Re. Claims 5-6, Choudhury does not explicitly disclose wherein data included in the master cross reference list of components is optionally output to a user based on at least one security mechanism that allows for at least two levels of security associated with parts of that data and users accessing that data, and a master parts reference module configured to analyze data received by the master cross reference module via the at least one user interface; and

a master cross reference data structure configured to store reference data relating to trading partners, that data including at least one internal part number, at least one manufacturer part number, and at least one trading partner identity, wherein the

master parts reference module is configured to compare the data received by the master cross reference module via the at least one user interface with data included in the master parts reference data structure to identify received data that is inconsistent with the reference data, and a component market memory (hardware=hard-drive or software=database table) that includes both the master parts reference data structure and the master cross reference data structure, and following a determination that received data is inconsistent with reference data, the master parts reference module, queries a source of the inconsistent data to indicate whether the inconsistent data is erroneous or new data. However, these feature are will known to Internet used, in order to log to a seller site, the buyer must register and choose a user name and password, where the resisted members profile, user ID and password are stored for future use and to inquiry a part user enters the part number and the database searches the part and displays the part. It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the disclosure of Choudhury and Khan and include internet site registration feature to allow the seller monitor the buyer and make a database who buys what.

Re. Claim 9, Khan discloses wherein the master cross reference module is configured to perform analysis on data received from the at least one user interface via the master parts reference module and the master parts reference module does not output data that it has identified as inconsistent to the master cross reference module [Abstract; figures 2-5; paragraphs 29-33 (search engine)]. It would have been obvious at the time

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the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the disclosure of Choudhury and include the above features, as disclosed by Khan, to display the parts and the vendor list on buyer's screen and allow the buyer to choose from the parts and vendor.

Re. Claims 10-18, Choudhury discloses comprising at least one of: a plan module configured to cooperate with the master cross reference module to output alerts regarding a potential component delivery problem and guidance regarding at least one approved substitute component or inferred equivalent component to avoid the potential component delivery problem; a knowledge module configured to cooperate with the master cross reference module to identify component market trends; a design module configured to cooperate with the master cross reference module to provide improved design information to users; an order module configured (database) to cooperate with the master cross reference module to at least one of reduce procurement cycle time, eliminate manual component sorting and processing, create a comprehensive audit trail and improve access to competitive pricing and available component inventories. a trade module configured to cooperate with the master cross reference module to provide guidance on how to at least one of leverage component market size to source components in time-sensitive situations, create links with component suppliers, liquidate component inventory quickly without compromising demand for currently available components, and leveraging component markets to improve margin; and a move module configured to cooperate with the master cross reference module to monitor

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supply chain performance tracking and improve supply chain management. a buy/sell data comparator module configured to compare trading data from a plurality of trading partners to identify compatible component buy/sell requests, a request data analyzer module configured to analyze data received via the at least one interface to identify relevant data associated with a potential component trade, wherein the master cross reference module is configured to determine if at least one manufacturer part number associated with a first universal part number is an inferred equivalent of at least another manufacturer part number associated with a second universal part number and, if so, to associate those manufacturer part numbers with the first universal part number, wherein the master cross reference module is configured to determine, for at least one manufacturer part number, a degree of market use of a component associated with that manufacturer part number based on how many times that manufacturer part number has been identified as an approved substitute component in the data received via the at least one user interface, wherein the at least one user interface includes a procurement user interface configured to provide access to at least one internal part number linked to a plurality of manufacturer part numbers approved for purchase and further linked to other internal part numbers identifying in house inventory that has not yet been committed to manufacturing, wherein the at least one user interface includes a design engineer user interface configured to provide access to data stored in the master cross reference data structure including the at least one approved substitute component and the at least one inferred equivalent component in association with the universal part number, wherein the at least one user interface includes a component manufacturer

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user interface configured to provide access to data indicating design-in success against competitive manufacturers' products for MPNs through percentages depicting design engineering selections by component buyers, the percentages being determined based on data stored in the master cross reference data structure, and wherein the at least one user interface includes a logistics user interface configured to provide access to logistics data associated with a component associated with the at least one manufacturer part number [see entire document and pages 1-3, 6-10, 15].

Re. Claims 19-20, Choudhury discloses accessing data indicating a plurality of approved replacement (certified) components associated with a plurality of internal part numbers and a plurality of trading partner identification data [see entire document particularly, pages 1-2; 6-9]; assigning a universal part number to each unique combination of internal part number and trading partner identification [pages 1-2; 6-9]. Choudhury does not explicitly disclose sorting the accessed data following the assignment of the universal part numbers to group data by manufacturer part number and component manufacturer; and identifying at least one inferred equivalent component associated with at least one approved substitute component based on transitive property analysis of the sorted data. However, Khan discloses these features and comprising outputting or storing data indicating the identifying at least one inferred equivalent component associated with the at least one approved substitute component and an associated universal part number [Abstract; Figures 1-6 (741a74a, P/N 20-00042); paragraphs 22-25; 27, 29]. It would have been obvious at the time the invention

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was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the disclosure of Choudhury and include Substitute part, as disclosed by Khan, to allow buyer to search all possible cross references substitute parts or replacement parts and locate a distributor who can deliver crossed replaced stock parts.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Applicant is required under 37 CFR ' 1.111 (c) to consider the references fully when responding to this action.

US 6,169,992 (Beall et al.) "Search engine for remote access to database management systems" discloses a remotely accessing database management systems (5130) and performing guided iterative queries of knowledge bases (110) over a communication circuit such as the Internet (5124). The system includes a Web browser (5120) having a Java.TM. runtime environment (4015), and executable content client (5121) that may be downloaded from a remote location (103). A Krakatoa proxy server (5128), socket (5021), and tunnel (5129) establish a mechanism for remote procedure calls through firewalls (5126) via an HTTP server (5127). Guardrail counts (750) are preferably displayed to the remote searcher to facilitate guided iterative queries of the remote knowledge base (110). A configurable graphical action region (700) is preferably provided to the remote searcher via a graphical user interface to provide powerful navigation and linking of diverse useful information which varies based upon contexts selected by the remote searcher.

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Harish T. Dass whose telephone number is 571-272-6793. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00 AM to 4:50 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James P. Trammell can be reached on 571-272-6712. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Harish T Dass
Examiner
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10/11/06